Reviewer’s report

Title: Preoperative serum levels of lipocalin-2 and matrix metalloproteinase-9 (MMP-9) are associated with prognosis of breast cancer.

Version: 1 Date: 6 October 2011

Reviewer: Antonia Gounaris

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Major Compulsory Revisions
In their analysis, the authors do not take into account the therapy administered to the patients during the study period, even though it is known to affect DFS significantly. Additionally, they do not commend as to why they don’t consider this variable in their model. Moreover, according to their results and conclusions, they claim that certain variables previously shown to be closely associated with DFS (e.g. lymph node status, histologic grade, nuclear grade, etc) were excluded from the model based on their statistical data. Recent publications (Noh JM, J Breast Cancer 2011; 14(1): 16-51) support the correlation between DFS and these parameters even in the Korean population, nevertheless the authors have not considered or discussed this at all. Even though the study idea is interesting, the approach undertaken seems insufficient.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:
I declare that I have no competing interests